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ICANN84 | AGM – Get to Know ICANN Community: CSG/BC and ISPCP  
Sunday, October 26, 2025 – 15:00 to 16:00 IST

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you very much. Welcome back, everyone. And we are into the next session to learn more about BC, which is the Business Constituency, and ISPCP, which Lars will tell us what does it mean further, yes. But we will start with the Business Constituency, and it's my pleasure to introduce you the Chair of Business Constituency, Mason Cole. Mason, we don't have-- oh yeah, sorry, before we start, let me ask my colleague Fernanda to do the script. Thank you, Fernanda.

FERNANDA IUNES

Hello, welcome back, everyone. As Siranush mentioned, we're here for the Get to Know the ICANN Community - BC and ISPCP session. As always, my name is Fernanda Iunes. I am the Participation Manager for the session. Please note that it's being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct, ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy.

Please observe the following guidelines to participate in the session. Actually, I've also already posted them in the chat for your reference. During the session, questions will only be read aloud if submitted within the Q&A pod. Interpretation for the session will include English, French, and Spanish. If you'd like to speak, please

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raise your hand in Zoom. When called upon, virtual participants will be given permission to unmute in Zoom. On-site participants will use a physical microphone to speak.

Only questions posted in the Q&A pod will be read aloud during the session as time permits and when directed by the Chair of the session. Please state your name for the record, the language which you will speak if speaking a language other than English, and speak clearly at a moderate pace. I think I'm going to memorize the script by the end of the week. Here, back to Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you, Fernanda. Welcome back. Those who are late, thank you for being here with us. And yes, I will give the floor to the Chair of the Business Constituency, Mason Cole, who will tell us what is their constituency doing and how we can join, because they really need people who are capable to do the job, to do the work which they are doing. This is a very important constituency. This is one of the parts of GNSO, the Contracted Party. We know, we already heard about from Non-Contracted Parties. Yes, and this is part of another component of GNSO, part of GNSO, and Mason is going to tell us more.

Mason, the floor is yours. We don't have presentations, as I mentioned, for this particular session, but we will have interactive Q&A. Mason?

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MASON COLE

Thank you, Siranush. Can you hear me? Okay. Thank you, Siranush, and thank you to everyone for the invitation to join you today. It's a pleasure to be here. My name is Mason Cole. I'm Chair of the Business Constituency, which is a component of the Non-Contracted Party House. I'm joined here by my colleague, Marie Pattullo, who is our CSG liaison, the CSG being the Commercial Stakeholder Group, which is, again, part of the Non-Contracted Party House.

As Siranush mentioned, I don't have a presentation, but I'll give you just an overview of the BC, how we're structured, how you can participate if you're interested, and then a bit about what some of our policy priorities are, and then I'm happy to take some questions as well.

So the BC has been part of the ICANN model now for, I think, since the beginning. I've been participating in ICANN since 2000, which is, if you can believe it, 25 years now. That tells you something about me, doesn't it? But nonetheless, I'm pleased to be a participant and a supporter of the multi-stakeholder model. I've been Chair of the BC now for about five years. I've got another year coming in 2026. Again, if you can believe this, I'm the former Chair of the Registrar Stakeholder Group many years ago. I was a GNSO counselor for a while as well, so I've been pretty deeply involved in ICANN for some time.

The Business Constituency is made up of businesses and their representatives. We have members who are startups in areas of the

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world that are maybe economically challenged, and we have companies that are multi-billion dollar enterprises that rely on the BC to advance their policy goals inside the ICANN model. So you can see our membership list on our website. Our website is [icannbc.org](https://icannbc.org), and everything that you need to learn about the BC is on that website.

We are made up of an executive committee, and that's made up of me, Marie, again, who joins me here today, two vice chairs, one who's in charge of policy and one who's in charge of finance and operations, and then we have two GNSO counselors as well. So that's our executive committee, and that group of people, they're elected to their offices, and they're in charge of steering the direction of the BC and advancing our policy agenda.

So as I mentioned, I'm not sure how many members we have right now. I'm going to say somewhere in the neighborhood of probably 60 to 70 members of the BC. Not everyone is active, an active participant in the ICANN model, but they rely on the BC to advance policy in the ICANN arena that is beneficial to their business. So as I mentioned, we represent businesses. We represent business users of the internet. We represent their customers, and our job is to enhance business-friendly policies that make their way through the ICANN model.

In terms of policy priorities right now, we have a few, but probably the biggest one is dealing with abuse that flows through the domain name system. If you've been around the ICANN, the past

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several ICANN meetings, you've heard a lot about DNS abuse, and there's a definition of DNS abuse that's employed for the purpose of working policy through the system or through contracts with registries and registrars. Abuse consists of phishing, farming, spam, malware distribution, things like that. That's not everything that comprises DNS abuse, but that's what's been dealt with so far.

So what the BC is working on doing is cooperating with others in the non-contracted party house and with our colleagues, with the registries and the registrars to develop enforceable policies that can be applied by ICANN compliance that will do more to mitigate or prevent DNS abuse. So you may have heard that there are two PDPs working their way through the GNSO right now dealing with DNS abuse. One has to do with the availability of a bulk registration function, and the other has to do with-- oh, now it slipped my mind. I can't believe that. But anyway, I'll come back to it. There are two, and what we're hoping to do is widen the focus of the GNSO to include focus on some other areas of DNS abuse or prevention measures that can be employed.

So we have other policies that we pay attention to as well, obviously, but because DNS is such a broad and persistent problem, we're dealing with that one first. So I can't think of much more.

Oh, how to join the BC. Yeah, thank you. That's very important. So if you represent a business, and by business I mean it can be a one-person business or it can be a multinational conglomerate, you're

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welcome to join the BC. We have a credentials committee to which you submit your application for the BC. That application is evaluated by the credentials committee to make sure that you comply with our membership criteria, which is not particularly stringent. We have all kinds of members.

And you pay a membership fee. And depending on the size of your business, it's a tiered membership fee. So if you're a small business, you pay less. If you're a large business, you pay a little more. Those fees go to the administration of the BC and to help defray some travel costs. And your membership is good for one year. It's renewable annually. And once you're in the BC, we're looking for active people that are willing to actively engage in the ICANN model.

So if you have an opportunity and you'd like to join the BC, I encourage you to ask me or Marie or any member of the BC any questions you might have about how to go about that. It's very easy. And then you'll be immediately drafted into being put to work on some of our policy work. So I hope that some of you will consider joining the BC and will consider being an active member, because as Siranush said, yes, we can use all the active hands that we can get. So I think I covered everything. Did I? Was that good?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. Thank you, Mason. Any questions to Mason? Yes, please, Maciek. Let's start.

MACIEK PIASECKI

Hello, Maciek Piasecki, fellow. I am thinking about joining the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group. So we are destined to be mortal enemies, probably. No, but in all seriousness, do you see a lot of traction between you and the human rights people? And how are you able to overcome that and work together? And maybe you can share a success story.

MASON COLE

Sure, yeah. Thank you very much for the question. Your question was, is there friction between our positions and human rights positions? Not really. Not usually. Depends on the issue. We just had a day-long session on Friday with the NCSG, which is the other half of the Non-Contracted Party House. And we spent an entire day in the same room together going through policy priorities and finding out where we had areas of cooperation and where we had areas of conflict.

I'm pleased to tell you that there are naturally going to be a few areas of conflict. But the BC, if not, if we don't advocate for something, we at least don't object to the inclusion of some areas of human rights considerations in ICANN policy. For example, in some of the areas that we're dealing with on DNS abuse, the NCSG is very interested in making sure that registrants have a due process opportunity.

If one of their domain names is caught up in an abusive situation and a registrar takes action on that domain name, the NCSG wants to make sure that there's due process for the registrant's rights to be considered. And we agree with that. We think that's perfectly normal and appropriate. So there are some areas of conflict, but that's not one of them. So I hope that answers your question. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. Yes, please, Shanelle.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Shanelle Mcpherson, returning ICANN84 fellow. Question for you. I heard you made mention of different business and their tiers. I know that some persons here don't actually own a business. However, is it possible for one to join the work that you're doing with ICANN without having any form of business model or businesses in their respective region? And how do they go about getting that done? Thank you.

MASON COLE

So if I understand your question, you're saying if you don't have a business or you're not representing a business, can you still join the BC?

SHANELLE MCPHERSON

That's correct, yeah.



MASON COLE

I think it depends a bit on the nature of your the advocacy that you want to carry out and your representation. So I'd be happy to talk to you after the session about the particulars of your situation so I can understand. I don't think I can answer your question without knowing a bit more. But thank you for the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Yes, please go ahead.

SADICHCHHA SILWAL

Thank you so much. It's me, Sadichchha Silwal with NextGen. I have a question. In 2021, the U.N., in Business and Human Rights Conference declared the safety by design must be a priority for the business cooperation. When we talk about the connectivity provider, internet service provider, sometimes this safety by design also covers the issue of connectivity inclusivity, which is directly somehow related with or come across the business model this private cooperation of the business are doing. So how do this see as BC is dealing with the business model and the safety by design by U.N. as mandated?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Can you like briefly ask the question, the last part of it? Yes, slow down and close to the mic because we cannot hear you well.

SADICHCHHA SILWAL

So my question is, as there is a mandate of U.N. to have safety by design, which also include the issue of connectivity, inclusivity, how do this group include this issue within the policy level and how the interest is being balanced between business and human right?

MASON COLE

All right. Thank you very much for the question. There's a lot in that question. The BC doesn't deal very much with connectivity issues. That may be a question for Lars for the ISPCP because he represents the ISP connectivity providers. Yeah. So I think that's a question better suited for him. But I will say in general, the BC certainly supports as many people participating in the internet economy and culture as possible. I'm not familiar as much with the U.N. directive that you're referring to, but I'd be happy to talk about it if that's something that could help support. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Is there any question? Yes, please.

OM PRAKASH SHARMA

Hi, I'm Om from Nepal with Nixon. My question is, do you have any numbers on what kind of business entities are the member of BC, for example, large multinational company or small enterprises? So is there any percentage distribution among these? Thank you.

MASON COLE

By the way, I'm joined here by my colleague, Segunfunmi Olajide, who is our vice chair for policy. So information about our members and their distribution is on our website. If you go to [icann.org](https://icann.org), there's a page there that lists all of our members and you'll see exactly who our membership is made up of. And it's detailed. It has company names and everything.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

And by the way, a couple of small businesses who are part of Business Constituency are led by fellows. I know them. They are here. So if you want to talk to them and they can guide you, particularly how small businesses can become part of Business Constituency, just come and talk to me. Yes, please, Jasmine Ko.

JASMINE KO

Hello, this is Jasmine Ko, an ICANN84 Fellow. My question is about, since you, within your groups, you have small business and also MNC, I assume, right, like bigger corporates. So I'm just curious, what is the way that you guys can ensure there's equal and consensus based participation and also decision making? What is the process and dynamic like with the mix of different business nature and scale? Thank you.

MASON COLE

Thank you. It's a good question. We have a tiered membership model, but that model doesn't come with additional weight in terms of influencing our policy outcomes. So you might represent

a Fortune 50 company, but your opinion it doesn't drive the BC on the whole. I mean, everyone has an equal voice inside the BC. So if you want to join the BC, then your voice will be heard along with the big companies. And your opportunity to contribute to the policy development work of the BC will be considered just as equally as it would be by any other BC participant. I hope that answers your question. Okay, good. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Yes, please go ahead.

ANUPAM GAUTAM

I'm Anupam Gautam. I'm a NextGen from Nepal. And I was looking forward to websites. And so my understanding is BC relates to the different issues that companies post on it. And then BC carries a community that carries it forward to different ICANN meetings, maybe, and other BC meetings. But I was looking forward to your website and the calendar has none of the meetings listed on it. So I was quite curious about it.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

They don't have meetings where?

ANUPAM GAUTAM

On the official website, [icannbc.org](https://icannbc.org).

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SIRANUSH VARDANYAN      There are no listed sessions or meetings on their website? That's what you mean?

ANUPAM GAUTAM      Yes.

MASON COLE      Yeah. Oh, I see. I understand your question. Are you interested in joining a meeting at some point? Is that what you're saying?

ANUPAM GAUTAM      So actually, I was looking forward to what BC actually does. And I was looking to a calendar about the previous months and next month and what activities you carrying out throughout maybe different months this year. So I was looking to the calendar and I see none of them.

MASON COLE      Right. You're right. We don't have a meeting schedule up there. And that's probably something we should include. We meet, our constituency meets with its full membership every two weeks. So we meet on Thursdays every other week. And we meet in person at all the ICANN meetings. And then the ExCom meets once every, I don't know, six weeks or so, something like that.

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ANUPAM GAUTAM                      It's just that it's not updated right now. Right. But you guys do have the meetings, but it's not updated in the website currently. Right.

MASON COLE                          Correct.

ANUPAM GAUTAM                      Okay. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN                Note taken. Yes.

MACIEK PIASECKI                      So a bit of follow up to your question. I know other constituencies that you can be observer at the meetings. So can you be an observer with you as well?

SEGUNFUNMI OLAJIDE                My name is Segunfunmi Olajide. I serve as the vice chair for policy to the Business Constituency. To address your question, you can join as an observer just for you to have a clear understanding of what we do at the BC. But because it's linked to that question, our membership meetings is not listed on the website because it's exclusive to membership. So it's not something you could just find a link on the public. But if you're interested in joining one of our meetings as an observer, kindly let us know. And we'll add you to a list of observers where you can be scheduled to join our meetings.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN Whom they can send an email and request?

SEGUNFUNMI OLAJIDE An email or request?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN Whom? Whom they can send?

SEGUNFUNMI OLAJIDE Okay. So you could do [bc-policy@icann.org](mailto:bc-policy@icann.org).

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN We'll put it up in the chat now as well. Okay, thank you. And one last question we can take for BC. Go ahead. No problem.

ANUPAM GAUTAM So if it's proprietary and we need to be a part of the BC, then only to see the events listed. What's the point of having the calendar in the website? That's a follow up question to what you just said. Because you said that it's a proprietary thing and you need to be a member, but the website is a public thing. So maybe I should not be able to look into the contents of what is happening, but maybe these are the events that is happening. Just a follow up to your statement.

MASON COLE

You raise a good point. Thank you for the feedback. Well, we'll take that is a point of discussion for the ExCom. So thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Okay. Any last minute questions for BC ? I don't see any hands. Where? Oh, Okay. Tinuade, go ahead.

TINUADE OGUNTUYI

Good afternoon, everyone. Tinuade Oguntuyi from Nigeria, ICANN84 Fellow. I apologize in case this has been attended to because I walked in a bit late. I just wanted to know about the new gTLDs because I know the business constituency is also. How are we doing with this? I remember during the prep week, there were a number of showcase from the BC team, I think one of the ALACs meeting. So where are we on this? Is there likelihood of some form of postponement? Is there likelihood of anyone coming soon since the last one was 2012 and the one currently is 2024? Thank you. Let me just add contest. I've asked because for some of us that are new, we've not been able to maybe actively get involved. And this is an opportunity to actually really get involved in one way or the other. Thank you.

MASON COLE

Okay, thank you. I think I understand the question to be, Where are we with new gTLDs and what is the BC 's role in new gTLDs? Right. So I'll lead that off and then the second for me, you can join if you'd like. But ICANN org has said that the new gTLD application round



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will start next year. So sometime in April of 2026 or afterward, you'll see the application window open and you can submit applications for a new TLD if you're interested in having one. The BC has been active in new TLD policy development. And I'll turn to my colleague Segunfunmi to discuss the policy aspect of that.

SEGUNFUNMI OLAJIDE

Right. Discussions are ongoing as regards the new gTLD. And as a constituency, we've been following up closely with the schedule as provided by the institution ICANN itself. So what we do at every point where we have opportunity to pass comment or advocate is we do ensure that we advocate for the interest of commercial businesses that depend on the internet for doing business. So our position has always been that whatever move, whatever policy, whatever action is being taken, the interest of businesses and internet end users is always taken care of from our own perspective. I hope that answers your question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you very much. And thank you, Mason. Thank you team behind this.

MASON COLE

Well, thank you again. Thank you, Siranush. And thank you for having us today.

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SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you very much for joining us and our appreciation to your group. Thank you. And I would like now to give the floor to Lars Steffen, who is representing ISPCP, which is Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers. So this is a new abbreviation for us to learn today as well. And without further ado, Lars, the floor is yours and I will upload your presentation on the screen.

LARS STEFFEN

So thank you very much. So first of all, thank you very much for having me. I'm now presenting the ISPCP, the Internet Service Provider and Connectivity Provider constituency. Next slide please. So just some basic information about the ISPCP. I'm the executive officer of the ISPCP until December before we'll move on to be the future vice chair. The ISPCP has been founded in 1999. Thank you. According to our bylaws, we have a few eligibility criteria to become a member of the ISPCP.

So you have to be an ISP or a connectivity provider that is operating an internet backbone network, or you are an ISP or connectivity provider that is providing access to internet users or internet content providers, or you are an industry association that is represented in one of those other two categories, which is in my case. If I'm not with the ISPCP, I'm the head of digital infrastructures and resilience at ECO, the industry association based in Europe. And I'm also the vice president of EuroISPA, the European Umbrella Association of the National ISP Associations.

As the BC, the ISPCP has around 60 members. You can also take a look at our website which is [ispcp.info](http://ispcp.info), where you also have a list of our members, which is also ranging from a broad spectrum of different sizes, so from very small ISPs to very large corporations like Orange from France or Lumen from the US, Verizon, AT&T, Deutsche Telekom, etc., etc., but also a huge number of very small companies to have a broad representation of our industry.

Same as the business constituency, when you take a look at the structure of the GNSO, the Generic Name Supporting Organization, we are also, when you take a look at the usual structure that is displayed on the right-hand side of the GNSO, where you can find the non-contracted parties house, and together with the business constituency and the IPC, we are part of the commercial stakeholder group. Next slide, please.

Well, the mission of the ISPCP just goes along with the bylaws of ICANN. I think that's pretty straightforward. So our main goal is to work in the benefit of the ICANN community and also of the organization, that the policy development within ICANN guarantees and enhances the operational stability and security of the Internet, which is one of the core interests of our members. And, of course, we are committed to the effectiveness of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model. Next slide, please.

The current structure of the ISPCP, I think it's quite similar to most other constituencies. So we have a chair, which is currently Philippe Fouquart from Orange. He will also stay as chair after the

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1st of December. Susan Mohr, the current vice chair, will move on to the GNSO Council, and I will take the seat of Susan. Thomas Rickert, who is together with Osvaldo Novoa, the current two representatives of the ISPCP in the GNSO Council. So Thomas is a colleague of mine, also from the ECO Association. He has ended his term, so Susan will take Thomas' seat. And then I've seen him in the room. We have Nitin Walia with us. He is our current NomCom delegate of the ISPCP.

When you take a look at our charter, you will also see two positions which are optional, the membership coordinator and the credentials committee. The credentials committee is the leadership that you see here on the slide. Membership coordination falls into the remit of the executive officers. I'm taking care of updating our website, our membership directory, etc. But I don't do this only by myself. I always have great support from ICANN staff, which I would like to mention here as well.

And if you move on to the next slide, how do members of the ISPCP participate? So we have, like every constituency, a mailing list where we circulate our information, where we exchange thoughts and ideas on positions and papers. We have also monthly meetings, not biweekly. We do this monthly on a Monday afternoon from a CET point of view. We participate in ICANN policy development, so in the GNSO Council, in different working groups, and if there are cross-community working groups, we have done

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this in the past as well. And of course we represent the ISPCP in all the current working groups.

On a general level, I will give you a few examples of the topics that we are currently working on. And, of course, contributing to all the policy developments in the GNSO that are relevant to the ISPCP. What are those? Next slide, please.

So our main focus is on the core infrastructure of the internet industry. So we have a strong focus on issues that are related on the operational stability of the DNS root zone. We help our members to shape policies that have an impact on ISPs and connectivity providers that might cause disruptions on how ISP customers interact with the internet. And policy issues that are decided are always decided by consensus, which we ensure through our monthly calls, but also on exchange of thoughts and ideas on the mailing list. And same with the BC, one member, one vote, so there is no pay-to-play. There are also no membership fees involved.

So if you are meeting the eligibility criteria that are based on our bylaws, there are no membership fees involved. So if you are interested in this, this is a quite low barrier, and we have a membership form on our website, which you can fill out, and then we will take a closer look at your business and match it with the eligibility criteria, and then happy to welcome you on board of the ISPCP. Next slide, please.

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So the usual process is that if we have a topic at hand from the policy development processes that we have in the GNSO, we identify a drafting team leader, mostly voluntary. So that person is helping to draft a first position that is shared with the entire group. So we have common periods where everyone can contribute to those papers and consultants in the community, usually for seven working days, sometimes longer when there are holidays involved and things like that, and if possible, also to provide feedback in time to the entire policy development process. And we always do our best to ensure solidarity, so to find positions that are represented by all members of the ISPCP.

This is the list of our most recent policy statements from 2025. So as you can see, one of the main topics that has been on our list and is still on our list is the update of the RIR governance document, so how regional Internet registries should be governed in the future. Most or all of our members rely heavily on a stable and secure infrastructure, including domain names and IP addresses, so this is one of the main concerns and this is why we have a strong focus on this, which is also known as the Internet Coordination Policy, so this goes along the same vein.

We also monitor and follow the discussion on the WSIS+20 process because this is relevant to the entire industry and the entire community, including ISPs. And also we participate in GNSO discussions like data accuracy and also DNS abuse, for example, as Mason already rightfully mentioned. Next slide, please.

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Yes, so in general, next to the topics that we just recently put comments on our website and fed them into the general process, is the new gTLD program is one thing that we observe very closely for ISPs and connectivity providers. One of the issues that is potentially coming with new gTLDs is name collision, for example. One concrete example for German ISPs in the recent history with new gTLDs was the launch of the tld.box, so there are many routing devices that are used primarily by ISPs in the German speaking area where you have the opportunity to access your router on your local network when you type in the address fritz.box and as long as there was no official tld.box out there, it worked pretty well until someone else, when .box was available, registered the domain name fritz.box for malicious purposes.

So it took some time to solve this issue, but it also created a lot of service requests for each individual ISP that handed out those devices to its individual customers. So sometimes new gTLDs are closer to ISPs than you might think, so just to give you one example how this might work. Of course for ISPs and connectivity providers also the debate about WHOIS registration data and also the access to it is of relevance from different angles and along with this goes also the question of data accuracy.

Inside ICANN, of course, we participate also in discussions like holistic review in the past, so what's the current structure of ICANN, the GNSO and parts of it and if this should be updated, yes or no, and everything that is technical on the DNS level is also of interest for us. To address the question to the calendar that you also find

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on the ISPCP website, we just recently had over the last 12 months a series of DNS capacity building webinars that you can see in the past on our calendar and if you are asking yourself why don't you see further webinars already scheduled on the website, we have meetings with other constituencies here at this ICANN meeting to collaborate with them on future webinars.

So, we are currently working on the agenda for the upcoming webinar series that will be published on the calendar of our website in the near future. And what we also did is some hands-on sessions in collaboration with OCTO at the last ICANN meetings also part of the series, but what we have experienced is that the webinars are much more well received and attended than the hands-on sessions that we did in present at those ICANN meetings. Next slide please.

So why do we do this? As every constituency, we are always looking for new members to participate, to actively participate in the work of the constituency but also in the work of ICANN in general, so one of the reasons why we do those outreach webinars is to recruit new members, let's be honest and blunt on this, because we think there are more people, more organizations, more companies that heavily rely on the infrastructure that is managed through ICANN, so we think there should be more, also from different parts of the industry, including the BC, the IPC, etc., that should have more interest in ICANN in general, including ISPs. So, this is why we do these outreach efforts and continue to do this also in the near future. Because we think what is happening here is relevant at a



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global scale, so this is why even more should participate in this.  
Next slide please.

Thank you for your attention and I'm happy to take some questions. And of course, you are more than welcome to join the ISPCP membership work session on Tuesday.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN      Tuesday? What time?

LARS STEFFEN      At 10:30.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN      10:30 on Tuesday, so those who would like to join ISPCP working session, feel free to do that. Thank you, Lars, thank you, appreciate very much. So we have time for a couple of questions. Yes, please go ahead.

SADICHCHHA SILWAL      Thank you so much. For the record, Sadichchha, with NextGen from Nepal. My question is, conflict often arises between authority and government policies and ICANN's policy, especially in regard to access to the data, DNS abuse related. So how does the ISPCS within ICANN's multi-stakeholder framework works to address this tension, especially what strategies or the policies advocacy effort

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is ISPCP undertaking to protect internet service provider from authoritarian government pressure?

This is particularly with reference to Nepal, as in September, Nepal government pressurized ISPs to block 26 social media or face the penalties. So ISP has to block all those social media, including Facebook, Twitter, due to which there has been a great revolution, all those Gen Z protests and everything. So in this regard, the ISP has been in great pressure, whether not to block or to block, to either with the government decision or to protect the users. So how is this community working to balance between the ICANN's policies and those authoritarian government policy?

LARS STEFFEN

Thank you very much. Again, a complex question. But let's break it down. As you rightfully mentioned, we live in a world with many different jurisdictions and different levels of regulation in that regard. So it's different, if not nearly impossible, to tackle it on a global level in the same way. What we try to do is to educate. So what actually regulators would like to achieve and if blocking is the right tool to achieve that goal. So what we do, not only as ISPCP, but also with my association, also with EuroISPA, is to educate.

So if you want to have malicious content taken down, blocking is not the most effective measure to take. And this is what we are also working on as a trade association, is to build closer relationships between registries, registrars, and hosting cloud service providers. Because if you want to take down malicious content, you have to

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talk to those where the content is hosted. And this is why it's a long path. So it's not a quick solution, but it's a process that we have to start. And this is also what we have already started, but that we have continuously working on.

So if we are talking about getting malicious content from the Internet, the first thing that we should try to do is taking down the content and not blocking the way to it, because there will always be several other ways that you can still access that kind of content. And when it comes to regulators, it's educate, educate, educate. Because there will always be new staff members in ministries and in governments. So this mission of education is going on continuously because you will always have new members of parliament, new members of ministries, or other bodies that are relevant in that direction that you can talk to and that you can educate about what is most effective if you want to tackle certain issues on the Internet.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. Yes, please go ahead, Samir.

SAMEER GAHLOT

Thank you. Thank you for the presentation. Sameer Gahlot for the record, current fellow. I just want to ask one question. What are the initiatives which ISPCP is taking for pushing the businesses or the private sectors to adopt universal acceptance? Because that is the loop wherein we are stuck, wherein the private sectors are not

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taking the actions or the initiatives. So any concrete outcome that this committee is taking or any plans in the future? Because as per the website, I can see that they posted something about six years ago on Facebook. So any clue on that?

LARS STEFFEN

Yes, of course. So some members of the ISPCP have been very active in creating the USG and also have been active participants in the USG for many years. Some of them moved on to the new initiative called CODI that you might also have heard of. So members of the ISPCP are still working on universal acceptance. And even if you don't see it that high on our agenda, it's one of those constant topics that we always still try to add to other discussions that we have constantly.

It also always depends on which region you're active in. For some regions it might be more appealing to be able to have multilingual domain names, email addresses, other scripts to be supported. As in the Western Hemisphere, for example, where most people are quite fine using ASCII standard scripts. But I fully agree with you that if this Internet should be global and inclusive, we have to push even harder for implementing all those standards and requirements that make it possible to have an UA-ready Internet. Maybe not in the near future, but that we are working on it.

So long story short, my organization that I'm working with is when we have the opportunity to add some UA flavor to a discussion, we always take the opportunity. And one of the nice narratives that is

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working quite well for us is data accuracy. So even if the story or the narrative of having an inclusive Internet doesn't resonate so much, at least in the Western Hemisphere, governments are really interested in data accuracy, which includes next to ASCII, use UTF-8 for databases.

So when it comes to storing data of your residents as accurately as possible, you have to have UTF-8 to also support certain scripts. And that's one of the nice starting points where you address a certain issue that people are really interested in and tell the story from the other end of the dimension, ending up to a point where you say, when you have all your systems in place for data accuracy from that point of view, you're also half the way ready to be UA-ready on the Internet. And this is one of the stories that we always like to blend in when you have the opportunity to address this.

SAMEER GAHLOT

Because the current infrastructure is that ICANN is sharing the case studies, which should be coming from the private sectors, like how they are doing, and to motivate others. So just a suggestion. Thank you.

LARS STEFFEN

Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. Any last-minute question? Yeah, Tinuade. Please go ahead.

TINUADE OGUNTUYI

Thank you very much, Tinuade Oguntuyi, for the record. While you were sharing your slide, I penned this. You said ISP members help shape policies that helps the ISPs and CPs. And you said you have 60 members. So I'm curious to know why the team from the ccNSO came. Not all ccTLD managers are ccNSO members. But whatever advocacy or policy they do, I believe it helps cover every ccTLD manager. What you do at the ISPCP, does it also cover all the ISPs? And what are the things that are binding? I ask this because I work in an ISP environment. And I know your slide also showed you have some interactions with the regional Internet registries. So while we have that issue with AFRINIC, for instance, what was the role of ISPCP in all of that to probably solve the problems?

LARS STEFFEN

So our relationship with IRRs is that the business of ISPs and connectivity providers heavily relies on what the IRRs are providing as a service, the distribution of IP addresses. What happened at AFRINIC was, to be honest, a wake-up call to the entire industry. What can happen if one of the IRRs is not working anymore as expected? And this also led to the work at the ASO and also to a very more close relationship and working environment with the

ASO because this wake-up call led to the recognition that we have to pay more attention to this.

So it might be disappointing for you to hear that when I have to tell you we should have paid more attention earlier. And the new policy that is now currently drafted intends to address this and to avoid situations like this in the future. If it is enough, we will have to see, but it's a starting point for the industry to pay more attention to this and hopefully not to see this again.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. And the last question we'll take from Anupam.

ANUPAM GAUTAM

So there's no membership fee, right?

LARS STEFFEN

Exactly.

ANUPAM GAUTAM

So who funds ISPCP? Does ICANN fund it or who funds it? How do the operations work?

LARS STEFFEN

Thank you. So for some members of the leadership team, there is travel funding provided by ICANN to be transparent, but everything

else needs to be covered by the organizations that the individual members represent.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. No questions, if I see. Okay, thank you very much.

LIDYA ASSGELITEW

Lidya from Ethiopia, for the record. My question is, I come from East Africa, Ethiopia, where we have so many languages which are a struggle to be represented in the ISP, for example, owning a business, and where multilingual scripts and local languages content are growing, but still underrepresented. So how can ICANN efforts on DNS stability and ISP policy also accelerate universal acceptance, ensuring that domain names, email addresses, and local scripts are fully usable and accessible in every corner of the world?

LARS STEFFEN

So as we already discussed about universal acceptance before, we don't have the mechanism to enforce it. So it is the same as I explained with blocking, it's education, education, education, outreach, outreach, outreach. I've been a long-year member of the universal acceptance steering group, and we developed a lot of documentation that you can hand over also to technical teams to provide guidance how to implement this. But we always called it the broccoli issues in the USG. So it's not only universal acceptance, it's the same with IPv6 and other standards that



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should be implemented more broadly, but are not. Because it's a question of budgeting, it's a question of prioritization, it's a question of never change a running system, etc.

So there are so many excuses, to be fair, that still keep us from implementing those standards. But I fully agree with you, we should do more. And also ISPs and connectivity providers are the ones that could spread the word. And if I see capacity building projects, primarily led through the Internet Society, about building Internet exchanges, also in Africa and other regions, where we still lack the necessary capacity for connectivity, those are projects where I always hope that also those standards are already built in when you set up new infrastructure. And I really hope it's a question of time. But to address your question directly, it is about education and outreach, because we don't have the tools at hand to force anybody to do this.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. And our appreciation to you, Lars, from all of us. Thank you for coming here. And with that, just thank you for being here with us. And the meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**